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Meadowlands Mayors Support International Effort to Address Climate Change

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The Hackensack Meadowlands Municipal Committee (HMMC) recently voted to support the Kyoto Protocol, joining the NJMC in a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Meadowlands District seven percent below levels recorded in 1990 by the year 2012.

“Realizing that we live in an urban area, we have to take responsibility for the air we breathe,” said HMMC Chairman and Secaucus Mayor Dennis Elwell. “The actions we take now will set the trend for the future, creating cleaner and better communities.”

“We are proud of the leadership and foresight the Meadowlands mayors have shown through their efforts to protect our environmental security for this generation and those to follow,” said Susan Bass Levin, NJMC Chairwoman and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner. “By joining in support of the Kyoto Protocol, the mayors have shown how to transcend the type of parochialism which threatens to exacerbate global climate change. They are seeking a better future for the nearly 500,000 residents who call this region home.”

By supporting the Kyoto Protocol, the 14 Meadowlands mayors have taken a bi-partisan, regional lead in recognizing the effects local climatic disruptions are having on the world environment, including increased risks of flooding, rising sea levels, extreme heat waves, and greater concentrations of smog.

The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 141 nations. The nations agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions an average of 5.2 percent below 1990 levels. In July 2006, the NJMC Board of Commissioners voted to endorse the treaty to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions in the 32-square mile Meadowlands District, five miles outside of Manhattan.

The HMMC will encourage each of the member municipalities to endorse the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and implement individual policies to resolve global warming. To date, 333 mayors representing 53.5 million Americans have endorsed the treaty, including the mayor of Kearny.

“Government should lead by example,” said Kearny Mayor Alberto Santos. “Real reductions in greenhouse emissions require dramatic changes in how we work and live. I am very pleased that all the mayors in the District realize the importance of this global challenge.”

Further, the NJMC will work with the Meadowlands municipalities to support the agreement through a number of initiatives already under way, including adopting land use regulations reducing sprawl and supporting green building, developing a comprehensive transportation plan for the District that meets growth with alternative and public transportation options, preserving open space and wetlands, and establishing a renewable energy District and a solar energy consortium across NJMC properties, municipal buildings, school buildings, private warehouses and other structures with large, unobstructed roof space.

The HMMC consists of 14 mayors of the Meadowlands’ municipalities. The HMMC’s powers include review of codes and standards formulated by the NJMC, the Meadowlands Master Plan and its subsequent amendments, and development, redevelopment, and site improvement plans in the Meadowlands District.

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